

KENNEDY

SELECT COMMITTEE ON ASSASSINATIONS

009530

Name Edward P. Morgan Date 6/22/78 Time 10:00AM-1:00 P.M.
Address 900 17th Street, N.W. Place Office of Mr. Morgan

Interview:

Mr. Morgan stated that his Senate testimony would be better than his current recollection of the events. He first learned of the assassination plots from Maheu. He believed Maheu was to be called before the Long Committee in conjunction with a Morgenthau investigation in New York City. He does not recall Maheu telling him anything about the Las Vegas wiretap when he first informed him of the plots. He was first informed sometime in the fall of 1966. Maheu told him generally that he was involved in CIA plots to assassinate Castro and this might come out if he was called before the Committee. He did not give him at this time many specific details. Morgan contacted Senator Long concerning this. The Senator wanted an official verification that it was a CIA matter. Morgan therefore contacted Houston, general counsel to the CIA and had a discussion with Houston in ^{Morgan's} his office. He believes Houston talked to the Committee but is unsure of this. He doesn't recollect whether the CIA actually approved the Las Vegas wiretap in advance or merely learned of it afterwards and feared the probe into the individuals involved would

Interviewer Signature Present were John Hornbeck, Mike Ewing and James Wolf
Typed Signature James L. Wolf

Date transcribed _____

By: _____ Form #4-A

Edward P. Morgan Interviews

Page 2

expose the assassination plots. He repeated he did not recall Maheu telling him anything about the wiretap at that time. He does recall Maheu telling him Roselli was involved in the plots. He doesn't remember if Giancana was mentioned. He stated Roselli came to see him probably because of Maheu. It was sometime in late 1966 Roselli came because Morgan was former Chief Inspector of the FBI, and Roselli was complaining about excessive surveillance from the FBI ever since he did his one "great act" for his country (participating in the plots). Morgan advised Roselli to go directly to the Bureau. Morgan does not believe Roselli ever did. Morgan had the impression that Roselli knew that Morgan knew about the plots. Morgan believes that Roselli discussed the plots with him prior to his Las Vegas ^{ARREST} visit on December 29, 1966 but is unsure. He never discussed the plots with Maheu and Roselli together. Morgan did not know anything about Roselli's deportation case during this time - Morgan was surprised when that came out during the Los Angeles trial. Morgan doesn't recollect any discussion of the Friar's Club investigation during this period of time. He believes Roselli told him Giancana was involved but not Giancana's specific role. Roselli asked Morgan to handle his appeal when he was convicted but Morgan was too busy with the Howard Hughes business. Morgan suggested Tom Waddin handle the case, who eventually did. Morgan never heard Santos

Edward P. Morgan Interview

Page 3

Trafficante's name as being involved until it was released in the press.

He first approached Drew Pearson at his home in early '67 with general background of these stories. He wanted Chief Justice Warren to get the information, but he did not know Warren personally. Morgan ^{authored} offered two reports when he was in the Senate and felt he would have wanted information which undermined his reports, if such existed. Consequently, he thought Warren deserved the information he had. He stated Pearson's article appearing was a surprise to him. He never spoke to Pearson about its appearance, nor did he ever speak to Mahen or Roselli about it. Rawley (of Secret Service) was a friend of Morgans. Morgan did not know he was involved in this until the Senate Committee released his name. He never had a discussion with Garrison about this or anything else. When asked about his March 20 interview by the FBI, he still cannot remember it, but states it must have occurred. When Morgan first spoke to Pearson, he doesn't remember if he told Pearson his source of the story. Mr. Morgan was shown a copy of his FBI interview at this time. He said Roselli told him the specifics which were in the interview although he emphasized that he was very vague with the FBI agents since he didn't want to breach an attorney-client privilege. Also he "theorized"

Edward P. Morgan Interview

Page 4

at times during the interview to mitigate an attorney-client problem. Roselli told him he had friends who were still in Cuba. He doesn't know how Roselli would enlist help in Cuba. Roselli was "always paranoid" about the fact^{of} ~~the~~ ^{that} on the last assassination attempt, an individual was caught and tortured. It was in this context when Castro found out about the plots that Castro made the statement "we can play this game too." Morgan's impression is that this plot was 3-4 months before Kennedy's assassination. Roselli had many people "in place" in Cuba. These people were "support" for the assassination attempts. Roselli, he thinks, continued to get feedback from some of them. Morgan doesn't know if RFK knew of the plots. He never heard any remarks about RFK from Roselli. Roselli did contact him in Washington when he was called to appear before the Senate. Nothing of substance was discussed. Morgan was contacted by Harvey (CIA) two days before Morgan's scheduled appearance in the Senate. Harvey merely confirmed what Morgan already knew about the plots. When asked about the statement

Edward P. Morgan Interview

Page 5

in his FBI interview about the two people in New Jersey, he said that the report was incorrect - it should have said "for example, I read this in a newspaper today about two people in New Jersey." Morgan is fairly sure he read about the two people in New Jersey in a newspaper prior to his being interviewed by the FBI (contrast Senate testimony).

Morgan additions

Morgan stated that the CIA-Mafia plots would have been "the most significant intelligence information" that the Warren Commission could have had. Further stated that he still cannot understand "how the CIA could have let the WC go down that road" without telling them about the plots.

Of the assassination in general he commented that "I think the biggest regret is that it was never investigated as a murder" but more as a political event - not a straight homicide.

Again repeated that the CIA-Mafia plots would have been an "unbelievably significant piece of intelligence" for the WC

On Oswald:

"I'll always think the great blind spot in the Warren Commission Report, so long as I live, is the conclusion of a lone assassin. Never really being able to establish who he was or was with, and where, and why it came about."

Also stated that he has long thought that the Warren Report was "never satisfactory on Ruby" and why he killed Oswald. He speculated that Ruby's apparant underworld background "would dovetail" with a theory that the Mafia was involved in the assassination.

Also stated that his impression has been that Trafficante is the leading suspect - or probable person involved in Roselli's murder. He got this impression from the Miami investigators and it makes sense to him. He said that he would suspect that Trafficante "wnated to shut him up," quite possibly because of the CIA-Mafia plots and related aspects. Said he does not believe that Roselli was killed in Miami because of any common internal Mafia dispute, as some have said.

Upon being reminded that Jack Anderson disclosed that Roselli had provided further details about his theories in 1975-76, and that Anderson's last column on it stated that Roselli had apparantly suggested that Trafficante himself (or his own men) were involved in the assassination, Morgan said that if Roselli had said this that he (Morgan) would very much believe it.

Upon being told of Anderson's 1976 versions of Roselli's theories, Morgan seemed to make a point - quite firmly - of suggesting that he also thinks Trafficante could very well have been behind killing the President. He said that it "would not be illogical" according to the Roselli version that Anderson wrote about in 1976. Again, he seemed to go out of his way in pointing toward Trafficante as a possible suspect, and said that Trafficante's potential role in silencing Roselli would tend to lend credence to it. He ended by stating that he thought Trafficante presents an important "lead" for the Committee to pursue, while noting that "it would be extremely difficult to penetrate the hidden empire" of Trafficante and the Mafia.